

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-11 L-03 ACDA-19

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TO SECDEF WASHDC

SECSTATE WASHDC 8002

INFO DA WASHDC

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USNATO 5484

E.O. 11652: GDS, 31-12-80

TAGS: MILI, NATO

SUBJECT: NATO STANDARDIZATION OF SMALL ARMS AMMUNITION AND
A NEW RIFLE

DA FOR DAMA-PPIND DAMA-WSW. USAREUR FOR ODCSOPS/DS&T(LTC
WOODALL).

REFS: A. DA MSG 302103Z AUG 74.

B. DOCUMENT AC/225 (PANEL III) D/112, 11 SEP 74.

C. DOCUMENT AC/259-WP/19, 2 APR 74.

D. STATE 178225.

E. USNATO AIRGRAM A-72, 1 APR 74

BEGIN SUMMARY. MISSION HAS REVIEWED BACKGROUND OF NATO RIFLE AND
SMALL ARMS AMMUNITION STANDARDIZATION PROGRAM. REQUEST
CLARICATION OF US OBJECTIVES IN THIS AREA WHICH SHOULD BE
ACCOMPLISHED BY JUNE 1975.
FURTHER REQUEST STATUS OF US AWY DEVELOPMENT OF SQUAD AUTOMATIC
WEAPON (SAW). END SUMMARY.

1. MISSION TRANSMITTED TEXT OF US ARMY POSITION (REF A) TO CHAIRMAN
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OF NATO ARMY ARMAMENTS GROUP (NAAG) PANEL III (INFANTRY WEAPONS
PANEL) WHO INCORPORATED US VIEWS IN PROPOSED REPORT TO CNAD (REF B).
MISSION NTES FROM REF A THAT THE US DZY'S COMMENTS SUBMITTED
FOR THE RECORD AGREE WITH THE TEST SCHEDULE OUTLINED BY PANEL

III IN ITS 3-5 JUL 74 MEETING. TO INSURE THERE IS NO MISCONCEPTION ABOUT THAT SCHEDULE, IT CALLS FOR FINAL SELECTION AND STANDARDIZATION OF A NEW RIFLE SYSTEM (RIFLE, AMMUNITION AND ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT) IN JUNE 1980. SERIES PRODUCTION SHOULD BEGIN BY END OF 1980, A FULL SIX YEARS FROM NOW. THE DOCUMENT ALSO NOTES THAT THE SCHEDULE IS OPTIMISTIC BUT POSSIBLY ATTAINABLE.

2. SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S STATEMENT SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD AT THE JUNE 14 DPC MINISTERIAL MEETING AT NATO INDORSED THE BELGIAN RECOMMENDATIONS MADE TO THE CONFERENCE OF NATIONAL ARMAMENTS DIRECTORS (CNAD) IN APR 74, AND ASKED FOR A COLLECTIVE DECISION ON THOSE RECOMMENDATIONS NO LATER THAN JUNE 1975. THE BELGIAN RECOMMENDATIONS (PARA 5, REF C) ARE REPEATED FOR CLARIFICATION. BEGIN QUOTE.

RECOMMENDATIONS. IN VIEW OF THE CONCLUSIONS SET OUT IN PARAGRAPH 2(C) ABOVE, THE CONCRETE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE NATO 7.62MM CALIBER DESCRIBED IN THE PRESENT DOCUMENT, AND OE REPLACEMENT SCHEDULE, BELGIUM RECOMMENDS RETAINING THE NATO 7.62MM CALIBER FOR THE MEDIUM SUPPORT WEAPON AND THE LIGHT SUPPORT WEAPON. IF, FOR ANY REASON, THE CALIBER OF THE LIGHT SUPPORT WEAPON SHOULD BE LESS THAN 7.62 MM, BELGIUM RECOMMENDS- FOR PURPOSES OF STANDARDIZATION-THAT THIS CALIBER BE CHOSEN IN THE LIGHT OF DEVELOPMENTS IN THE WORK ON THE NEW RIFLE. THIS RECOMMENDATION IS SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

A. ABSOLUTE PRIORITY MUST CONTINUE TO BE GIVEN TO STANDARDIZATION OF THE AMMUNITION OF THE NEW RIFLE;

B. THE DEFINITION OF THE CALIBER OF THE LIGHT SUPPORT WEAPON MUST IN NO CASE DELAY OR ARREST DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW RIFLE. END QUOTE.

IN REF D WASHINGTON HAS PROVIDED AN INTERPRETATION OF THE SECOND PART OF THE SECDEF STATEMENT WHICH CALLS FOR A COLLECTIVE DECISION BY JUNE 1975. GUIDANCE IN REF D APPEARS TO GO SOMEWHAT CONFIDENTIAL

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FURTHER AND IS REPEATED FOR COMPARISON PURPOSES. BEGIN QUOTE:

THE PURPOSE IS TO ACCELERATE TEST, EVALUATION AND DECISION SO THAT THIS ISSUE CAN BE RESOLVED BY JUNE 1975. END QUOTE. IMPLICIT IN THIS INTERPRETATION APPEARS TO BE A FIVE-YEAR COMPRESSION OF A SCHEDULE ESTABLISHED BY THE INFANTRY WEAPONS PANEL AND AGREED TO BY THE US ARMY AS ALREADY OPTIMISTIC.

ACTION REQUESTED: CLARIFICATION OF US POSITION WITH REGARD TO WHAT THE US EXPECTS THE ALLIANCE TO ACCOMPLISH BY JUNE 1975 IN THE AREA OF RIFLE AND SMALL ARMS STANDARDIZATION.

3. THE ALLIANCE FACES IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS WITH NATIONS SUCH AS

DENMARK WHICH INTENDS TO MODERNIZE ITS SMALL ARMS WITHOUT WAITING FOR 1980 AS PROPOSED IN REF B. THE CASE OF DENMARK IS SYMPTOMATIC OF THE ALLIANCE AS A WHOLE. REPLACEMENT SCHEDULES FOR ALL TYPES OF WEAPONRY DIFFER WIDELY FROM COUNTRY TO COUNTRY. IT MAY BECOME NECESSARY FOR COUNTRIES SUCH AS DENMARK TO ADOPT INTERIM SOLUTION FOR A REPLACEMENT RIFLE IN 1975 IN 1976. IF PROPERLY STRUCTURED, INTERIM SOLUTIONS CAN ALSO PROVIDE A DEGREE OF STANDARDIZATION. IN THIS REGARD THE US SHOULD ESTABLISH A POSITION WITH RESPECT TO 5.56 MM RIFLE AMMUNITION. IF IT WERE DESIGNATED THE INTERIM NATO STANDARD RIFLE AMMUNITION FOR THOSE NATIONS WHO MUST MODERNIZE PRIOR TO 1980, THERE COULD BE SHORT-TERM ADVANTAGES TO THE US IN THE AREA OF COMMON LOGISTICAL SUPPORT. EARLY STANDARDIZATION OF THE 5.56 MM, HOWEVER, ALSO COULD RESULT IN UNDERMINING THE NATO TEST CENTRE TEST & EVALUATION PROGRAM. IN MISSION VIEW OSD AND THE US ARMY NEED TO SORT OUT THE VARIOUS ALTERNATIVES ON AN ACCELERATED BASIS. WE CAN EXPECT MEANINGFUL DISCUSSION OF THIS ITEM AT THE OCTOBER CNAD. DENMARK, AT LEAST, PROBABLY WILL LOOK TO THE US FOR A LEADERSHIP ROLE WITH RESPECT TO A SATISFACTORY INTERIM SOLUTION FOR DENMARK. BASIC TO THE SUBJECT OF INTERIM SOLUTIONS IS THE FEASIBILITY OF EXTREME ACCELERATION OF TEST, EVALUATION AND DECISIONS IN THE RIFLE PROGRAM DISCUSSED ABOVE. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS INCLUDE LOAN AS OPPOSED TO SALE OF US STOCKPILE WEAPONS (7.62MM M-14 OR 5.56MM M-16).

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 USNATO 5484

4. MISSION RECOGNIZES THAT THE US ARMY IS STILL PURSUING DEVELOPMENT OF A SQUAD AUTOMATIC WEAPON (SAW) WHICH IS IN THE CATEGORY OF LIGHT SUPPORT WEAPON REFERRED TO ABOVE. IF THIS DEVELOPMENT IS TO BE CONTINUED, AND IF THE US WANTS TO DRIVE THE SMALL ARMS STANDARDIZATION TRAIN WITHIN THE ALLIANCE, WE MUST GET OUT OF THE CABOOSE AND INTO THE ENGINE CABBAGE. IF WE CONCLUDE THAT WE NEED THREE CALIBERS OF AMMUNITION RATHER THAN TWO AS THE

BELGIANS RECOMMEND, THEN WE SHOULD ACTIVELY SEEK TO RECRUIT ALLIED SUPPORT FOR OUR VIEWS.

5. DIFFERENT PACKAGING REQUIREMENTS EXIST FOR THE MEDIUM SUPPORT WEAPON (US M-60 MACHINE GUN WITH BELT-LINED 7.62MM NATO-STANDARDIZED AMMUNITION), THE LIGHT SUPPORT WEAPON (US 6.0MM UNDER DEVELOPMENT OR ALTERNATE CALIBER, POSSIBLY NOT IN A LINKED BELT), AND A NEW NATO RIFLE (US 5.56 MM OR ONE OF THE NEW EUROPEAN CANDIDATE CALIBERS, WITH ROUNDS CONTAINED IN A MAGAZINE OR DRUM). THE LAWS OF LARGE NUMBERS APPLIED TO MANUFACTURE OF SMALL ARMS AMMUNITION PROBABLY WILL SUPPORT THE ARGUMENT THAT INCREASE IN LIFECYCLE COSTS OF FIELDING THREE CALIBERS VERSUS TWO (WITH INHERENT PACKAGING DIFFERENCES) IS NOT SIGNIFICANT BY COMPARISON WITH OTHER FACTORS SUCH AS INCREASED COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS. IT IS ESSENTIAL, HOWEVER, THAT THE US AND ITS NATO ALLIES CHOOSE THE SAME CALIBER AND NOT INTRODUCE OTHERS. IN ANY EVENT THE

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SELECTED TWO OR THREE CALIBERS MUST REFLECT NATO CONSENSUS. IN THAT REGARD CONSENSUS NEED NOT MEAN THAT EACH NATION MUST ADOPT ALL THREE WEAPON SYSTEMS (OR CALIBERS) WHICH THE US MAY DECIDE TO PROPOSE, BUT WE CAN EXPECT THAT ALL NATO-ACE NATIONS HAVE AT LEAST TWO OF THE THREE CALIBERS. IT MUST BE OUR OBJECTIVE TO OBTAIN AGREEMENT OF ALL NATO-ACE NATIONS ON EITHER COMMONALITY OR COMPLETE INTEROPERABILITY OF AMMUNITION AND ITS PACKAGING IN THE SELECTED CALIBERS.

6. THE US PARTICIPATED EXTENSIVELY IN THE NATO INFANTRY WEAPONS DEMONSTRATION AT BOURG-LEOPOLD, BELGIUM, ON 20 MARCH 74 (REF E). PERFORMANCE OF THE US 6.0 MM SAW WAS IMPRESSIVE. ALLIED REACTION IN GENERAL APPEARED TO BE FAVORABLE. THE US GAVE THE UK APPROXIMATELY 2,000 6.0MM ROUNDS FOLLOWING THE BOURG-LEOPOLD DEMONSTRATION AND AGREED TO FOLLOW UP WITH BILATERAL IN-DEPTH TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS. IT WOULD APPEAR PRACTICAL TO CONSIDER SEEKING UK SUPPORT FOR THE US SAW PROGRAM AS A PRIORITY EFFORT IF THE US IS TO CONTINUE THE PROGRAM. ACTION REQUESTED: MISSION WOULD APPRECIATE WASHINGTON COMMENT ON CURRENT PLANS AND FUTURE DECISION DATES FOR THE 6.0MM SAW PROGRAM.

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